



October 5, 2010

Dear Kitchen Cabinet members,

You may have read [my editorial in Sunday's News Tribune](#) about the pressing need to widen Interstate 5 as it runs past Joint Base Lewis-McChord. The base, including Camp Murray, is expected to see an increase in population of more than 14,000 by 2016, and keeping the only thoroughfare to and from the base restricted to three lanes in each direction is simply a mistake.

Did a friend forward this e-mail to you? [Click here](#) to sign up for these Kitchen Cabinet e-mail updates.

I've been sending out these updates for over three years now, and the upcoming 2011 session will no doubt be a very important one for our state. **Sign up to get updates about what's going on in Olympia.**



As I stated in the editorial, the explosive growth of Joint Base Lewis-McChord has resulted in a complete traffic standstill through the I-5 corridor, and this is not a problem that the city or Camp Murray can resolve by themselves. **This is both a state and federal problem, and the solution is to widen the freeway.** [The News Tribune editorial staff seems to agree with me](#)...at least without actually saying the words “*widen I-5*.” Last week, they opined in favor of JBLM changing the way it does business, the state Department of Transportation doing more to help solve the problem and allowing all sides some time to cool off before revisiting the issue.

## Camp Murray update

In [last week's Kitchen Cabinet update](#), I shared with you two letters on the subject...one from the Washington National Guard to the City of Lakewood blaming them for the loss of federal funding to build a new gate, and one from the chair of the Senate Transportation Committee to legislators detailing some future plans for the area. Even today's Olympian had a story titled, "[All parties must work together to resolve I-5 congestion](#)."



As I said in my editorial, **the time has come to stop bickering and start working toward a solution.** I'm sending a letter to the head of the state Department of Transportation calling on her and her staff to maintain an unbiased view regarding possible solutions to this traffic problem, and to give proper consideration to the traditional approach of providing more lanes for more users in this particular area. I'm also asking her to research partnership funding opportunities with JBLM, the Federal Highways Administration, the City of Lakewood, and even internally with the WSDOT Rail Point Defiance Bypass project that affects I-5 in this area. I'll keep you posted with the latest details as I get them.

## Overtime abuse at DSHS?

[Another recent article](#) I came across questioned whether the state Department of Social and Health Services is really saving taxpayers any money when they are paying out huge amounts of overtime. The article, written by Erik Smith of the Washington State Wire, states that *"The Department of Social and Health Services is making whopping overtime payments to workers to compensate for staffing cuts imposed by the Legislature – **raising doubt about whether any money is actually being saved at all.** DSHS paid out nearly 10,000 hours in overtime during the month of July, apparently because budget cuts from the Legislature forced the agency to freeze hiring and cut its staff. The agency's response was to work its remaining employees longer, and pay them overtime."*

The article goes on to allege that there was a rumor in Olympia this summer that state employees were actually being told not to worry about those furlough days, and that if they lost money through the furloughs, they could make it up in overtime. Most of the overtime at DSHS during the month of July came in a single area – the Economic Services Administration, which pays out welfare benefits. Overtime more than doubled in that area, from \$119,722 in July 2009 to \$249,511 in July 2010.

Needless to say, if there was any malfeasance then it raises some serious concerns about the way DSHS is being run.

## Anderson Island and Tanner Electric

Lastly, I received the following from Tanner Electric regarding the ongoing power issues on Anderson Island:

*Dear Senator Carrell,*

*Tanner Electric Cooperative and the Board of Directors would like to say thank you for all your support and participation in meetings and hearings related to the new submarine cable for Anderson Island. Your involvement was most instrumental and made it possible for us to obtain the needed permits for a project as complex as this.*

*All the permits and easements have been acquired. The new cable is on a barge in the Puget Sound and the preliminary construction started as of today. The marine installation is tentatively scheduled to begin on October 25th and will take about a week. If all goes well, we anticipate energizing the new cable the first week of November*

*Once again our members, our staff and our Board of Directors appreciate all you have done to assist us during this last year in making it possible for a new submarine cable to become a reality for Tanner Electric and the residents of Anderson Island.*

*Sincerely,*

*Steven W. Walter*

*Tanner Electric Cooperative*



I'm happy to report that Anderson Island residents will soon be on a stable, permanent source of power and I'm especially pleased that I was able to help facilitate the rapid replacement of the cable.

## In closing...

If you know someone in our district who might be interested in receiving these updates, please feel free to forward this e-mail to him or her.

You can always find information online by visiting my website at [www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell](http://www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Carrell).

As always, if you'd like to contact me you can write, phone, e-mail, or stop by. My office phone number is (360) 786-7654, and my home phone number is (253) 581-2859. Or you can write me at **102 Irv Newhouse Building, P.O. Box 40428, Olympia, WA 98504-0428.**



- Legislative E-mail address: [carrell.mike@leg.wa.gov](mailto:carrell.mike@leg.wa.gov)
- Home E-mail address: [mcarrell@hotmail.com](mailto:mcarrell@hotmail.com)

Sincerely,

Mike Carrell

28<sup>th</sup> District State Senator